

the junior Senator from New York regaled the Senate with his views on education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

He did me a great honor to denounce my proposal, Straight A's, rather specifically. But it did seem to me to be a strange and inverted world in which Straight A's, a proposal designed to empower education authorities such as parents, teachers, and superintendents—the very people who know our students by their first names—to say, somehow or another, this was an attack on local authority but that the issuance of thousands of pages of regulations, on hundreds of different individual categorical aid programs, at the Department of Education in Washington, DC, was somehow liberating.

The Senator from New York criticized our present education system as a failure, a statement with which I do not agree. I believe there are many improvements necessary, but my own experience, in literally dozens of schools over the last 2 or 3 years, has shown a tremendous dedication to better teaching methods, to the education of our children, to innovation, changes that I want to encourage.

In fact, if we look for something to criticize as a failure, we need look no further than the present Federal education system itself. Title I has now been in effect for 35 years. The difference in achievement between the kids it is designed to help and the less underprivileged children is as great as it was when the program began. Yet what we have from the Senator from New York and the Senator from Massachusetts is to have more of exactly what has failed and that perhaps what is really lacking is sufficient direction from Washington, DC.

I do not claim to be an expert on what is needed for a higher and better education in the city of New York or in any other New York school district. However, I don't think the Senator from New York knows more about what the schools in my State need—I won't even say that I do—than the superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents of students in my own State.

What we seek—and this will be the great debate that will take place in this body in less than a month—will be: Do we trust the people who have dedicated their lives and careers to educating our children, to make the fundamental decisions about what they need in 17,000 school districts across the country and hundreds of thousands of individual schools or do we believe they need total supervision and control in Washington, DC, in the bureaucracy in the U.S. Department of Education?

We have increasingly followed that lateral line now for 35 years. It is a dead-end street. That is what has failed to work in connection with our education system.

For the first time, with the minor exception of the Ed-Flex bill we passed

last year, we seek to restore some of that authority to our local school districts, to our teachers, and to our parents. That is what Straight A's is all about.

I suppose I should be honored to have my own program attacked specifically and by name because I think that means it is making very real progress. I know it is at home, whenever I go to a school or to a school administration building and discuss its ideas. Our teachers and our educators want more authority to make up their minds as to what their children need. Those needs are not the same in every school district. Not every school district has as its highest priority more teachers. Not every school district has as its highest priority more bricks and mortar. Not every school district has as its highest priority teacher education. Not every school district has as its highest priority more computers. But many school districts have any one of those as a highest priority, and many have some other. Each of them ought to be permitted, each of them ought to be encouraged, to make those decisions for the students.

A final point. The Senator from New York attacked this proposal as lacking accountability. We certainly have accountability now. The way our schools account for the spending of money under hundreds of present school programs is by filling out forms and by being visited by auditors who make a precise determination as to whether \$10 for one purpose has been used for some other purpose or not. It is a form of accountability that has required our school districts to spend more and more money on administrators and on filling out forms and less and less money on educating the students themselves.

We substitute for that one ultimate form of accountability, accountability measured by whether or not our students are doing better, by whether or not our kids are getting a better education. No State may gain the benefit from the provisions of Straight A's unless that State agrees to a form of testing, of actual achievement of the students, and promising if it is given this flexibility, those student achievement standards will rise, scores will rise in the period under which they are working with Straight A's.

It is neither more complicated nor more simple than that. The goal of educating our children is to see to it that they are prepared for the world in which they will live. We are now able more and more to measure how those goals are met. Do our students read better? Do they write better? Do they compute better? The accountability in Straight A's is measured by those standards, not by how well their administrators and teachers fill out forms and not how well they come out in an after-the-fact audit.

I have every confidence that as a part of the very important debate over education and the renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we will debate Straight A's. I am convinced as this body finishes its work it will be a part of the most constructive and most successful renewal of our activity in the field of education that this Congress has accomplished in generations.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I now ask consent there be a period for the transaction of routine morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RETIREMENT OF JACK E. HARPER, JR., CHANCERY CLERK OF SUNFLOWER COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Jack E. Harper, Jr., of Sunflower County, Mississippi. Mr. Harper recently retired as the Chancery Clerk of Sunflower County after serving tirelessly in this position for 44 years. This is an exemplary record of public service, and it is a privilege to honor this outstanding Mississippian for his unselfish dedication to Sunflower County government for so many years.

In addition to Mr. Harper's lengthy service as Chancery Clerk, I also commend him for his involvement in numerous civic activities and for his military service. Mr. Harper is a veteran of the United States Marines, having served 31 months in the Pacific Theater during World War II. In 1951, while he was a member of the Mississippi National Guard, he was ordered to active military duty for 2 years and served 1 year in Korea during 1951–1952. In conjunction with his military service, Mr. Harper is a member and past Commander of the Indianola American Legion and VFW posts. Additionally, Mr. Harper has been active in his community, as demonstrated by the fact that he served as President of the Indianola Lions Club and as the District Governor of the Mississippi Lions.

Jack Harper has always shown a commitment to education. He earned degrees from Indianola High School, Mississippi Delta Community College, and both Bachelor of Laws and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of Mississippi School of Law, my alma mater. Additionally, he has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Mississippi Delta Community College since January, 1961, and has served as Board Chairman since 1968. He is a past President of the Mississippi Junior College Inter-Alumni Association, and he is a member of the State Association of Community and Junior College Trustees. He currently serves as the Co-